

the surrounding hills and mountains and an abundance of small passerines on the Mkata Plain throughout the year.

It is, we think, reasonable to assume that a population of Taita Falcons is resident in the area but further records during other months are required to confirm this.

## References

- BRITTON, P.L. 1981. Notes on the Andersen collection and other specimens from Tanzania housed in some West German museums. *Scopus* 5: 14–21.
- ELLIOTT, H.F.I. & FUGGLES-COUCHMAN, N.R. 1948. An ecological survey of the birds of the Crater Highlands and Rift lakes, Northern Tanganyika Territory. *Ibis* 90: 394–425.
- RIPLEY, S.D. & HEINRICH, G.H. 1966. Comments on the avifauna of Tanzania 1. *Postilla* 96.
- GEERTSEMA, A.A. 1977. Taita Falcon *Falco fasciinucha* from the Gol Mountains, Tanzania. *Scopus* 1: 83

*N. E. Baker and E. M. Baker, Box 23404, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*

*Scopus* 18: 57–58, November 1994

Received 2 March 1994

## The status of the Red-faced Mousebird *Urocolius indicus* in Tanzania

With the revision of *Birds of East Africa* (Britton 1980) in hand, I would like to draw attention to a number of references to Tanzania which require clarification. A particular one which has surfaced several times is the distribution of the Red-faced Mousebird *Urocolius indicus*. Britton (1980) states that “there are good sight records from Ruaha National Park presumably referable to [the race] *mossambicus*.” The only published reference for Ruaha NP that I can trace is in the list in Williams (1981) which includes both Blue-naped *U. macrourus* and Red-faced Mousebirds. However, these lists were not intended as sources of primary reference and contain species the author felt *should* occur (J. G. Williams, pers. comm.). The sympatry of the two species has also been questioned (H. Schifter, pers. comm.).

Vesey-Fitzgerald & Beesley (1960) record only Blue-naped for Lake Rukwa, and Procter (1968) lists only Blue-naped and Speckled *Colius striatus* for the Usangu Flats. These areas, south and southwest of Ruaha NP, form an ecological barrier to the population of *U. indicus* from extreme southwestern Tanzania. The Tanzania Atlas data base contains no records of *U. indicus* from this area and I suspect that the sightings of Red-faced actually refer to Blue-naped when the blue of the nape was not seen.

Ulfstrand (1975) refers only to Red-faced for the Mtera basin downstream from Ruaha NP, but more recent visits by J.S.S. Beesley in 1981, 1982 and Baker & Baker (in press) found only Blue-naped.

If any readers have records or references for either species for Ruaha NP I would much appreciate hearing from them.

## References

- BAKER, N.E. & BAKER, E.M. (in press). An ornithological survey of Mtera Dam.
- BRITTON, P.L. (ED) 1980. *Birds of East Africa*. Nairobi: EANH.S.
- PROCTER, J. 1968. The birds of the Usangu Plains. *Tanzania Notes & Records* 69: 1–14.
- ULFSTRAND, S. 1971. A dry season ecological survey of the mammal and bird faunas of Kidatu and Mtera proposed impoundment areas in Great Ruaha River, Tanzania, in SWECO/TANESCO, 1975, *Mtera Reservoir, ecology of a new man-made lake in Tanzania*.
- VESEY-FITZGERALD, D. & BEESLEY, J.S.S. 1960. An annotated list of the birds of the Rukwa Valley. *Tanganyika Notes & Records* 54: 91–110.
- WILLIAMS, J.G. 1981. *A field guide to the national parks of East Africa*. London: Collins.

N. E. Baker, Box 23404, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

*Scopus* 18: 58–59

Received 14 June 1994

### Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* with a white eye-ring from the Kerio Valley, Kenya

On 8 December 1989 at the base of the Elgeyo Escarpment in the northern Kerio Valley (0°20'N, 35°40' E) I saw a Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* being much harassed by others of the same species. On closer examination, I saw that the bird had a white base to the bill and prominent white eye-rings on both sides of the head (type 1, Table 1). Apart from these obvious differences and a more skulking nature, the bird



Figure 1. *Common Bulbul Pycnonotus barbatus* of type 1 (Photo: N. Wilson)

was otherwise a typical *P. barbatus*. Although similar to the southwest Asian race *P. b. xanthopygos*, the eye-ring was markedly wider, being estimated at 2 mm wide. Two weeks later a presumed second bird was seen (type 2a). Although this was regularly seen during 1990, type 1 was not seen again until 1992, so it could not be certain whether two birds were involved.

Neither bird was recorded during 1991 but during 1992, however, a bird of type 1 appeared regularly and was photographed (Fig. 1). In March 1992, birds of types 1 and 2a were recorded, confirming that there were at least two bulbuls with white eye-rings.